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26 March 2018

Ms Julie Loffstadt
Headteacher
Horniman Primary School
Horniman Drive
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Dear Ms Loffstadt

Short inspection of Horniman Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school's welcoming, inclusive atmosphere ensures that pupils feel valued, respected and secure. Pupils behave extremely well throughout the school. They are polite and friendly towards staff and visitors. They work hard in lessons and talk enthusiastically about their learning.

You have worked with great determination, pride and passion so that pupils can do well. You are ably supported by your leadership team and rightly focus on developing the quality of teaching to secure the highest possible outcomes for pupils. Together with governors, you are continuing to develop plans to bring about further improvement. These are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Staff are well motivated through professional development opportunities to develop their practice in order to meet the needs of all pupils and accelerate their progress further. This is particularly the case in writing, where we agreed there is further work needed to ensure consistency in all year groups. Teachers deliver the curriculum in a fun and engaging way. For example, children in Reception enjoyed dressing up as 'super heroes' along with their class teacher.

The curriculum offers a broad range of specialisms, including philosophy. This ensures that pupils broaden their minds and think critically about the world.

The school benefits from a strong team of knowledgeable and effective governors. They share a great sense of ambition and challenge in all aspects of school

performance. They are fully committed to school improvement and work effectively with leaders. They are clear about their purpose and determined to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. Governors visit the school regularly to check on the effectiveness of the school's work. They are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All the required checks on staff are completed before they start employment. All staff receive comprehensive training which they apply to monitor pupils and report concerns when they arise. Leaders take robust action to report referrals. They work in collaboration with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families are well supported. Governors play a significant role in checking important aspects of safeguarding, including health and safety.

Pupils reported that they feel safe in school and parents who responded to the online survey supported this view.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection I met with you and senior leaders to agree the key lines of enquiry. The first key line of enquiry was to consider the consistency of high-quality teaching and how this affects progress.
- We visited classes in all year groups and looked at work in pupils' books. I found that most pupils concentrate, work hard and listen carefully. However, the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to deepen their learning, particularly in writing.
- Pupils are well supported by additional adults. Teaching and learning activities, when they are well matched, meet most individual needs. As a result, work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress from their starting points. I observed some pupils effectively using a word processing tool to accelerate their progress in writing skills.
- We agreed that absence, and especially persistent absence, has an impact on pupils' progress. The school has been successful in improving rates of attendance for some pupils.
- The second key line of enquiry was to consider how leaders are raising standards by ensuring that pupils are challenged to accelerate progress, especially the most able pupils. Assessment information shows that higher-attaining pupils do not make as much progress in writing as in mathematics and, especially in reading, as other groups.
- It is evident that new strategies introduced to improve the quality of teaching in writing are starting to have an impact. Pupils' books show that progress has accelerated over time. However, this is not consistent in all year groups. The most able pupils in key stage 2 are not sufficiently challenged with demanding written tasks. We agreed that this is an area for improvement.

- Occasionally, handwriting and presentation require improvement so that this is of a consistently high standard throughout the school.
- The third key line of enquiry we agreed was to see how leaders are developing the culture of the school and the curriculum to raise standards.
- Curriculum leaders are continuing to develop their management of subjects. In reading, teachers make sure that pupils have access to high-quality texts which inspire their writing. This further develops their skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Within the curriculum, leaders have introduced activities to capture pupils' interest to stimulate writing. For example, some pupils enjoyed writing descriptions of imaginary characters whilst others enjoyed assessing construction kits to find the best types for building and recorded their findings.
- Pupils enjoy being taught specialist subjects such as Spanish and philosophy. This enables pupils to broaden their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Pupils are very aware of the school's culture. They know about the key drivers to success. They enjoy being actively engaged in the development of the school's ethos through surveys and discussions in class and in assembly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- consistency of progress, especially in writing, increases as a result of initiatives being embedded
- the most able pupils in key stage 2 improve standards in writing by being consistently and sufficiently challenged with demanding written tasks.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lewisham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda Harvey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with leaders to discuss the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements since the last inspection. Together, we visited classes in early years and in key stages 1 and 2. We observed

teaching and learning and looked at a range of pupils' work in books. I talked to pupils about their learning, experience of school life and how safe they feel. I held meetings with leaders and governors and held discussions about safeguarding. I took account of the views of 131 parents who completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and their written comments. I also took account of the views of 30 members of staff together with pupils' views, both from the online inspection surveys and conversations with those I met during the day.